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ABSTRACT

This book provides a sequence of organized training sessions and activities designed to prepare students for such helping roles as student assistant, tutor, special friend, and small group leader. The first of the handbook's seven chapters provides an introduction to friendly helpers, describes helping characteristics, and presents an overview of the book. The second chapter focuses on listening skills. Looking at the person who is talking, paying attention to the person's words, being aware of the person's feelings, and saying something that shows you are listening are discussed. In the third chapter, three helpful responses are examined. Information is presented about asking open questions, clarifying and summarizing ideas, and focusing on the other person's feelings. The fourth chapter addresses problem-solving. A five-step problem-solving model is presented. The fifth chapter focuses on giving feedback. A three-part model is presented which can be used with students and adults. Complimenting and confronting others is discussed. The sixth chapter focuses on self-awareness and learning how to help others take a closer look at themselves. The physical self, beliefs and attitudes, skills and abilities, and the self with others are discussed. The seventh and last chapter focuses on various ways of becoming a friendly helper. Questions facilitators have asked, making a difference, and student facilitator merit awards are discussed. (LLL)

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ED346395

# becoming a friendly helper:

## A Handbook for Student Facilitators

by
Robert D. Myrick and Robert P. Bowman

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A Leadership Training Program for Young Students

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# becoming a friendly helper:

## A Handbook for Student Facilitators

by
Robert D. Myrick
and
Robert P. Bowman

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## A Leadership Training Program for Young Students

**(Grades 4 - 8)**

**Becoming a Friendly Helper (A book for students)**

**Children Helping Children (A book for trainers)**

*Becoming a Friendly Helper* is a handbook designed for students grades four through eight participating in a peer facilitator training program. The companion book, *Children Helping Children*, is a trainer manual providing ideas for organizing a peer program, preparing student leaders, and supervising helping projects.

**Dedicated to**

**Linda and Denise**

two very special "friendly helpers"

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# Introduction

This book is about helping. It will teach you how to receive and to give help. As you study it, you will learn some things about helping. You can become a better friend to others than you have ever been before.

You may be in a friendly helper program and studying this book in a training group. If so, you will practice some helping skills and then work in some helping projects. You can also use this book by yourself and try the ideas on your own. There will be many times when you can use what you learn, both at school and at home.

Like so many others your age, you can learn more about your feelings and ideas. You can also learn to solve problems, make responsible decisions, and help others to do the same. In schools across our great country, young people are learning more about themselves and others every day. They are learning to communicate. They are finding how nice it can be to have friendly helpers in life. All of us depend upon the good will and friendship of others. It makes life better when we know that friendly help is available.

After you read this book and take part in a training program, you can be a *facilitator* or friendly helper. You might work as an assistant to teachers and counselors, a tutor, a special friend, or a small group leader. You will learn more about these roles later.

The road to becoming a facilitator takes time and can be difficult. It is also interesting and fun. You are going to have rewarding moments that will make the journey worthwhile. Good luck on your way to becoming a friendly helper!

RDM
RPB

## Chapter I

# Friendly Helpers and Helping Characteristics

Sam was a small first grade student. One day he heard some boys yell at him, "Sammy is a carrot head—Sammy is a carrot head." Then the boys ran off to one side of the playground. Sam turned and ran in the other direction. He was afraid and wasn't sure what to do. After all, it wasn't his idea to have red hair. His father had red hair, but no one teased him. Sam secretly wished he were big and strong so he could "beat up" those boys. He'd teach them not to call him names.

But, today Sam felt small and weak. Sadness and worry showed on his face. He tried to hide from the boys behind the water fountain. What was he to do? He had already complained to the teacher, and she told the boys to leave him alone. But that didn't seem to matter. "Look out for the rabbits, Carrot Head," shouted one of the boys, as the others laughed. The water fountain wasn't big enough to protect him.

Nearby, Angie and her sixth grade friends were talking about their plans for Saturday afternoon. They could hear the boys teasing Sam. One girl told the boys to "go play somewhere else" because they were bothering her. Angie, however, could see that Sam was very sad. He looked lonely and hurt.

Angie walked over to Sam and said, "Hi, you sure look sad right now. Things just don't seem to be going well for you." Sam looked at her and hung his head. "Nobody likes me," he finally said.

Angie left her friends and talked with Sam. She asked him about school, about what he liked to do, and about his plans for Saturday. As she talked with him, Sam became a little more relaxed. He forgot about the other boys for awhile. He liked talking with Angie. She was so friendly.

Then, the bell rang and both Sam and Angie said goodbye. They started back to their classrooms. As Sam walked through the doorway, he turned around one more time. He gave a little wave and smile to Angie, who turned out to be a needed friend at just the right time.

Angie was pleased with herself, too. She felt like a friendly helper. She also was proud to be able to use some of the ideas that she had learned as a student facilitator.

What is a student facilitator? A *student facilitator* is a student like you who uses special skills to help others think about their ideas and feelings. When you use these skills, you can help others to talk about themselves. You can also help them to solve their own problems. These skills can be learned by almost everyone. They can help you become a better friend to other students, teachers and parents. This book will help you to become a friendly helper, a student facilitator, like Angie.

### What You Will Learn From This Book

Some of the things that you will learn from reading this book and from doing the activities are:

1. What kinds of problems other people have
2. What it takes to be a helper
3. How to be a better listener
4. What to say and do to make you a better helper
5. How to help others solve their own problems
6. How to use all of these ideas and more to become a friendly helper.

There are many students like you who have become facilitators and who have used the ideas in this book. Some have reported the successes they had with others. Some have told of the nice things that others have said about their help. However, almost all student facilitators agree that what they do is fun and that they also are helped in some special ways. Here are some things that student facilitators have said:

— "It makes me a better helper. I thought I was good at helping kids, but I'm a lot better now."

— "Other kids, and my teacher, respect me more. They think I am a good helper."

— "I like being a leader. Other students ask me for help now."

— "I learned that I'm not the only one who has problems."

— "I'm less afraid of people now. I also think I can solve problems of my own as they come up."

— "My grades improved. I think it's because I listen better than before."

— "My teacher told my parents that I am doing better in school since I was in the program. That's the first time she has said that about me."

— "I like it when I get to work with others. It makes me feel warm and happy inside. I like it best when I know I'm helping someone who needs it."

— "I got to be better friends with Tommy (another student facilitator)."

— "It was hard work some time, but most of the time it was fun."

— "I think if I had a problem and didn't know what to do, I would like to talk with a person who has learned what we have in this program."

— "The little kids were so cute. I was surprised how much they liked me.

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## How To Use This Book

Working through this book can be like planting a fruit tree. The more effort and attention that you give to it at first, the more fruit it will give to you later. The ideas in this book are like tiny seeds. They need to be cared for before they will grow and bear fruit.

Study the ideas. Make them a part of yourself. Look carefully at the examples. Think of times when you might have noticed the same thing. When you come to questions and activities, take some time to think about them. They, too, can be little seeds that will grow some budding ideas and skills. Later, these ideas and skills will blossom. They can turn into fruitful moments with others that will be rewarding to you and to them.

After you have finished the studies in this book, you may call yourself a "student facilitator." Or, you may choose to use another name like "friendly helper" that tells others that you are now a skilled helper.

There is an award at the end of this book. When it is signed by you and your teacher or counselor, you will be one of some very special students who have learned the art of helping others.

LUNCHROOM=>

## The Need For Friendly Help

Everyone has problems. Almost every day things happen which cause problems for people. Many times help is needed before the problems can be solved.

Let's think of some times when someone can use help. A little boy who is feeling lost may look around. He wants help even though he's afraid to ask for it. When mothers and fathers are ill, help from the rest of the family is needed. A teacher who is worried about a student may want to talk with someone about the problem. Can you think of other times?

Some new students in your school might be unsure of themselves and seem shy. Some will need help in making new friends. Or, maybe they could use a friendly listener. Do you know of anyone your own age who is having problems in school? Perhaps that person could use some special help. Sometimes, we can't think of what to do when we have a problem. We might ask ourselves over and over, "What should we do?"

James, a fifth grade boy, was being teased about his clothes. His parents made him wear black shoes, striped socks, and black baggy pants. His stiff white shirts rubbed against his neck and made it sore. James wanted to obey his parents, but he wanted to wear clothes like the other boys in his class. He felt very sad and confused. James didn't know what to do.

Sarah, a fifth grade girl, smiled often. Others thought she never had any problems. She was popular and did well with school work, but science was boring to her. She loved to play with Snowflake, her cat.

Snowflake had long soft white fur. She waited just inside the front door of the house for Sarah's return from school each day. One day, as Sarah walked through the door, she sensed that something was wrong. Her mother said that she had some sad news.

Snowflake had been hit by a car that morning and was dead. Sarah cried and cried. She grew very sad and lonely. The next day Sarah couldn't think about her school work, no matter how hard she tried. She needed someone who would listen to her. She needed a friend who could understand what she was feeling.

Both James and Sarah had problems. Each of them needed someone who would be a friend—someone who would show interest, understand, and care. They needed friendly help.

Let's look at some other examples. The following were said by other students. Friendly help was needed by each one.

— "I can't find my library book."

— "I don't get good enough grades for my parents."

— "I wish I were different."

— "The girl who sits behind me keeps getting me into trouble."

— "My parents are getting a divorce."

— "I'm afraid to walk home after school."

— "I'm lonely."

— "Things just don't ever seem to turn out right for me."

## Who Needs Help ?

### Activity 1.1

Think of a time when you noticed someone who needed help. What was the person thinking and feeling? In the space below, draw a picture that will help tell what happened.

## Who Are the Helpers?

### Activity 1.2

When we have a problem, there are several people who might help us. Read through the list and answer the questions that follow.

Parent (or Guardian)

Teacher

Counselor

Principal

Nurse

Police Officer

Grandparent

Neighbor

Brother or Sister

Friendly Student

Stranger

Other?

1. *Underline* each one you might go to for help, if you have a stomach ache.
2. *Put a star* in front of each one you might go to for help, if a group of kids started picking on you.
3. *Circle* each one you might go to for help, if you had some problems with math.
4. *Draw* a sad face after each one you might go to for help, if you were very lonely.
5. *Put an "X"* by each one you might go to for help, if someone in your class was telling lies about you.

**Students as Friendly Helpers**

How many times did you pick "friendly student?" Has another student ever asked you for help? Have you ever asked another student for help? Young people often seek out others near their own age when they want to talk about something that bothers them.

While adults can be very helpful, they are not always the first people students turn to for help. Some young people think adults are too busy and have little or no time for them. Some fear that their problems are not important enough to bother their parents or teachers. Others worry that adults may not understand. They are afraid to ask them for help. Still others like the friendship and help of someone their own age.

When we want help, we usually go to someone who makes us feel comfortable. Most of us feel better with friendly people. We don't want help from people who are bossy, pushy, or know-it-alls.

The best helpers have a lot of good ideas. But, above all, they also know how to help us talk about our problems. They want to know what is on our minds. *They take the time to hear us out, before they give their own ideas and suggestions.* They want to know about us.

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## The Helping Characteristics

A lot is known about friendly helpers. The best helpers show some important characteristics when they are with others. Among these are four that you will want to think more about. If you want to be a friendly helper, then you will want to show that you are: (1) caring, (2) accepting, (3) understanding and (4) trustworthy. Let's look at each of these.

**Caring.** Friendly helpers show that they care about others by being interested in them. They are concerned about what is happening to other people.

You can show that you care about another person by being a "careful listener." Pay attention to the other person's ideas and feelings. Try not to interrupt. This could make the person think that you are not interested and that you don't care.

If you really care about the persons with whom you are talking, you will be open to their ideas. You will let them share a part of their lives. You will show that you care and they will feel closer to you than before.

**Accepting.** Friendly helpers respect other people. They accept people as worthwhile. You can show that you are accepting by trying to learn more about the other person's point of view. Try not to judge people as they share ideas with you. Avoid putting labels on them such as "bad," "goody-goody," "dumb," "stuck-up," "sissy," "brainy," and so on. Labels lump people together. They ignore personal worth.

An accepting helper values human beings. Yet, accepting someone does not mean that you must agree with what the person does or thinks. You may disagree with someone but still accept that person as worthy of your help.

**Understanding.** Friendly helpers are able to see things from the other person's point of view. They understand the person.

You can show your understanding by "tuning in" to a person's feelings, as well as ideas. You can listen to the story that the person is telling and find the most important thoughts and concerns. You may even be able to summarize them. You might also hear and tell the feelings that go with a story. This shows real understanding. The person you are helping will be impressed with your listening skill.

**Trustworthy.** Friendly helpers are seen by others as people who can be trusted. They say and do things that make others feel safe and secure.

You can show that you are trustworthy by keeping a person's ideas private. Others will learn that what they share with you will not be used against them. When they trust you with their thoughts, they might risk telling more about themselves. You could be a valuable key to help unlock problems and concerns when others know that you can keep a secret.

Do you think that Angie showed Sam these four characteristics when she talked with him? What do you think Angie did to help Sam talk about himself? Do you think Sam would like to talk with Angie again? Why?

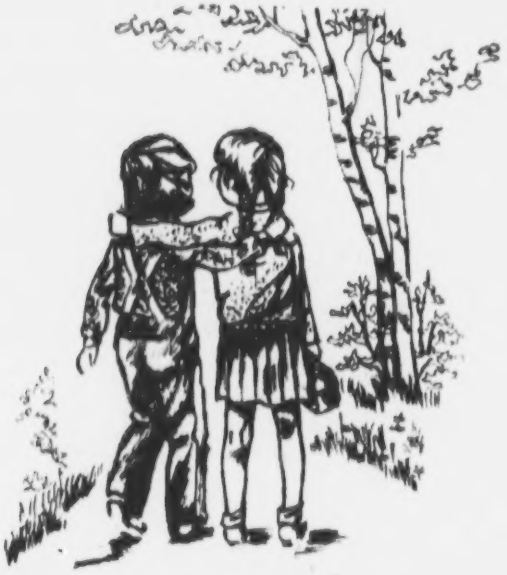
## Summary

To become a friendly helper, you will need to study about helpers and the skills they use. The more you study and practice, the more you will improve.

You are going to learn some new ideas and skills. Do you remember when you first learned to count? To learn the letters of the alphabet? It might have been difficult and even puzzling in the beginning. You may have wondered what it all meant. Yet, today, you use these basic skills to do math and to read books.

This book will give you some new skills for helping others. You can be a student facilitator—a friendly helper. Others your age have enjoyed being facilitators and have been helpful.

Will others want to talk with you? Can you learn to be more caring, accepting, understanding, and trustworthy? You are needed as a friendly helper. There are many people—both students and adults—who can use your help.



# Feeling Word Search

**Activity 1.3**

Each letter below is part of one or more words which describe feelings. Words may be spelled forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally. Find each and circle it. See if you can

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | I | S | L | I | K | E | D |
| A | E | J | U | K | D | A | I |
| S | N | R | W | R | M | B | A |
| T | Z | G | O | Y | E | L | R |
| O | X | C | R | N | Q | E | F |
| H | A | P | P | Y | G | V | A |
| B | F | R | A | N | T | I | C |

1. Disliked
2. Sad
3. Hot
4. Mad
5. Sure
6. Able
7. Happy
8. Frantic
9. Angry
10. Ignored
11. Afraid

## Chapter II

# The Careful Listener

Here are some things that have been said by teachers. Can you think of times when you might have heard similar things in your school?

— "Pay attention, now."

— "Everyone needs to listen now."

— "Who heard what David said?"

— "You're not listening very well."

— "Everyone is talking at the same time—take turns and the rest can listen."

— "If you'd only listen more then you wouldn't get in trouble."

— "Do I have to tell you the rules again? Okay, but listen carefully this time."

— "Quiet now, everybody listen."

Listening is one of the most important parts of learning. Those who learn to listen closely usually do well in school. They can follow directions better. They make fewer mistakes. Poor listeners, on the other hand, have more trouble understanding assignments and ideas. They often need to be told something more than once. A poor listener has more problems in school.

Poor listeners also have trouble making and keeping friends. For instance, Jeanne liked to talk about herself. She enjoyed telling others about the things she did and the thoughts she had. When others talked about their ideas, Jeanne would interrupt and start talking about herself again. Sometimes she acted as if she hadn't heard what others had said to her. She was thinking too much about herself. Jeanne was a poor listener.

Doing well in school and having close friends depends a lot on being a good listener. Yet, listening is something that most of us take little time to think about.

Students go to school to learn reading, writing, math, science, and other subjects. They seldom take time to learn listening skills. Yet, these skills can help all students have more success in school and with friends.

What is a good listener? Are you already a careful listener, or can you improve your listening habits? How can you know if you are really listening to someone? How can you tell if someone is listening clearly to you?

You will need to think more about the answers to these questions if you are going to be a friendly helper and a "facilitator." Let's begin by thinking more about listening habits and looking at four things that careful listeners do:

1. Look at the person who is talking.
2. Pay attention to the person's words.
3. Be aware of the person's feelings.
4. Say something that shows you are listening.

**1. Look at the person who is talking.** The careful listener looks at the person who is talking. It is possible to hear people without looking at them. But, listening and understanding are much easier when you look directly at the person who is talking. It is even better when you can see the person's face. The face can tell you a lot about what is being said. You can use your eyes, as well as your ears, to learn about people and their ideas. With practice you can almost "see" what people are thinking and feeling.

Teachers or friends might say to you, "Hey! Pay attention!" They probably want you to look at them or at whatever they are doing. They want your eyes on them. Your eyes will tell them whether you are interested or not. Your eyes tell them about your reactions. They give them clues as to what you are thinking.

Your eyes say a lot about you. When they are focused on people whom they are talking, they tell these persons that you are listening. You care enough to face them. You give them your attention. You want to hear what they have to say. This shows that they are important to you. Many people need good eye contact before they will warm up to you and see you as a friend and helper.

## Feeling Faces — Part I

### Activity 2.1

Look at the pictures of these boys and girls. What kinds of feelings do you think they are having? Under each picture are three feeling words that tell what the person might be feeling. Circle the one that you think *best* fits the picture. Put an "X" by the one that *least* fits the picture.

A.

_____ 1. Excited
_____ 2. Sad
_____ 3. Relaxed

B.

_____ 1. Shocked
_____ 2. Joyful
_____ 3. Bored

C.

_____ 1. Cheerful
_____ 2. Unsure
_____ 3. Angry

D.

_____ 1. Fascinated
_____ 2. Frustrated
_____ 3. Afraid

E.

_____ 1. Terrified
_____ 2. Nervous
_____ 3. Calm

F.

_____ 1. Confused
_____ 2. Angry
_____ 3. Grateful

**2. Pay attention to the person's words.** Careful listeners hold back their own ideas at first. They focus on what a talker is saying. Sometimes that's not easy.

As you listen to people talk you might think about many things. Their words can start you thinking about your own ideas. You can always share these later. To be a good listener you must keep your attention on the person talking.

Be patient with people who are talking to you. Give them time to tell what is on their minds. Let them be the center of attention.

It also might be helpful to listen for the main ideas that a person is talking about. Can you tell the ideas in your own words? Can you say them in such a way that the person would think, "Yes, that's what I was trying to say."? Listening for central ideas can be useful when a person has a lot to say. Try to remember a few key words and ideas.

## Key Words and Feelings

### Activity 2.2

There is more to listening than looking at a person and remembering what was said, that is a beginning. This activity can assist you to hear thoughts and feelings better.

**Case No. 1 - Danny:** "You know, the other day in art, Jim got me in trouble with the teacher. He said that I didn't clean up and that I was the one who left the brushes on the table. I was so mad at him. It was all I could do to keep from hitting him."

Which of the following *best* tells about the key idea Danny said? Underline it.

1. You made the teacher mad at you.
2. You left the paint brush out.
3. You didn't clean up.
4. You think that the teacher likes Jim best.
5. You don't like what Jim did.

Which of the following *best* tells what Danny might be *feeling* as he was telling his story. Underline it.

1. Excited
2. Happy
3. Angry
4. Scared
5. Lonely

**Case No. 2 - Suzanne:** "Have you studied for the test? What do you think Mrs. Adams (the teacher) might ask us? I studied a lot, but I'm still not sure about some of it. How do you think you'll do?"

Which of the following best tells what Suzanne said? Underline the key idea.

1. You are thinking a lot about the test.
2. You studied late last night.
3. You wish you could study some more.
4. You hate tests.
5. You don't like Mrs. Adams.

Which of the following best tells what Suzanne might be *feeling* as she was telling her story? Underline it.

1. Happy
2. Sad
3. Angry
4. Worried
5. Lonely

**3. Be aware of the person's feelings.** Some people listen only to the exact words that are being said. They hear ideas, but they miss the feelings that go with the words. Feelings are a natural part of a person's life and they shouldn't be ignored.

Feelings are always part of us. Listen for them. Identify them. Remember how they fit with what the person is talking about.

Feelings are our emotions. If you are a careful listener, it is possible to hear a person's feelings—either pleasant or unpleasant. In fact, thinking about feelings in this way can help you to be a better listener. If you really want to show that you are a careful listener, then "tune in" to feelings.

Sometimes it will be worthwhile to think, "What am I hearing—pleasant or unpleasant feelings? Or, am I hearing both kinds of feelings?" Below is a list of *pleasant* and *unpleasant* feeling words. Why are some pleasant while others are unpleasant? How can you tell the difference?

| **Pleasant Feeling Words:** | **Unpleasant Feeling Words:** |
|---|---|
| Happy | Sad |
| Glad | Angry |
| Thankful | Disappointed |
| Excited | Uncomfortable |
| Proud | |

Some pleasant and unpleasant feeling words appear in Table 1. As you look at these words, which ones seem strange to you? Which ones are new to you? Which ones have you heard before? Can you think of some more feeling words to add to these lists?

## Table 1

## Pleasant and Unpleasant Feeling Words

### Pleasant

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accepted | Enjoyment | Interested | Relaxed |
| Amused | Enthused | Involved | Relieved |
| Calm | Excited | Joyful | Safe |
| Certain | Fabulous | Liked | Satisfied |
| Challenged | Fascinated | Loved | Secure |
| Cheerful | Free | Neat | Settled |
| Comfortable | Friendly | Needed | Strong |
| Confident | Grateful | Peaceful | Super |
| Contented | Happy | Pleased | Sure |
| Cozy | Hopeful | Powerful | Touched |
| Delighted | Important | Proud | Trusted |
| Eager | Included | Refreshed | Unburdened |
| | | | Warm |

### Unpleasant

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Afraid | Disappointed | Hopeless | Sad |
| Aggravated | Discouraged | Hurt | Scared |
| Alone | Disgusted | Left-out | Shocked |
| Angry | Distant | Lonely | Shy |
| Annoyed | Disturbed | Mad | Startled |
| Ashamed | Down | Miserable | Tearful |
| Bitter | Embarrassed | Mixed-up | Teased |
| Bored | Exhausted | Nervous | Tense |
| Cheated | Frightened | Put-down | Terrified |
| Confused | Frustrated | Rejected | Tired |
| Depressed | Furious | Restless | Worried |
| Desperate | Helpless | | Worthless |

# Feeling Faces — Part II

## Activity 2.3

Look at the pictures below. How many of the faces show pleasant feelings and how many show unpleasant feelings? Beside each of the feeling words under the pictures, put a "P" for pleasant feelings and a "U" for unpleasant feelings.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

F. _____

## The Lunchroom Line

Activity 2.4

Look at the picture of the lunchroom line. There are two groups of students. Each group is thinking about what they see. They are also showing some feelings. List three feeling words that you think might fit for each group.

Group 1 (the boys standing)

Feeling _____

Feeling _____

Feeling _____

Group 2 (the two girls)

Feeling _____

Feeling _____

Feeling _____

**4. Say something that shows you are listening.** You may look at someone and hear words and feelings. But, the person will not know if you are really listening unless you say something that shows it. Careful listeners are able to tell what they have heard. They know when it is their turn to talk. They don't change the subject. They stick to the point.

What a careful listener says also encourages the person to talk and think more about things. What they say shows the person that they understand and are interested.

Has there ever been a time in your life when a friend, teacher or parent didn't listen very well to you? How did it make you feel? Did you have pleasant or unpleasant feelings? Write those feeling words here:

_____

_____

_____

Think of a time when someone was a careful listener to you. How did that person pay attention to you? What kind of feelings did you have then? Write those feeling words here:

_____

_____

_____

Listening is not an easy job. To really listen you have to concentrate so that you can tell what you have heard. You will need the skills discussed here. You will also need to practice.

## Summary

All people have thoughts and feelings. Listen for ideas but also be aware of pleasant and unpleasant feelings when someone is talking with you. This will help you tune-in and give you more understanding.

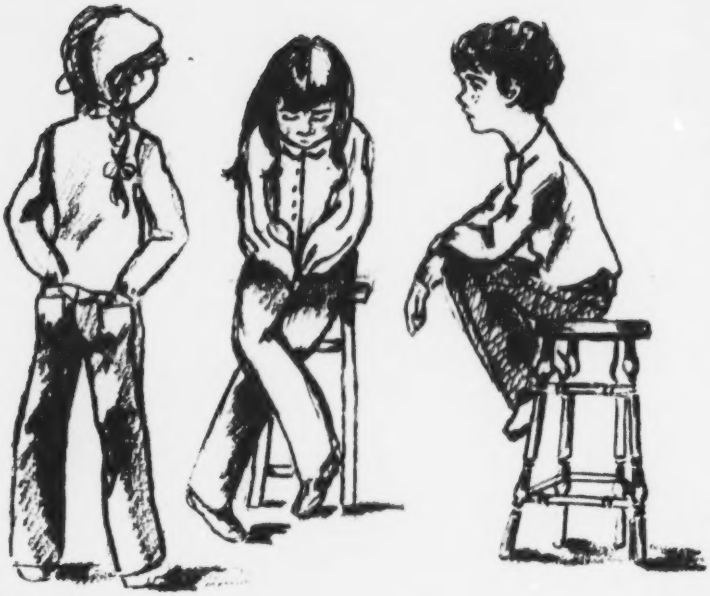
Listening is one of the most important parts of being a friendly helper. It can help you be more successful in school and with your friends. To be a careful listener, (1) look at the person who is talking; (2) pay attention to the person's words; (3) be aware of the person's feelings; and (4) say something that shows you are listening.

## Chapter III

# Making Helpful Responses

"What should I say?" "What do I do now?" These questions are common to student facilitators who are learning how to help others. Listening is the first and most important part of helping people. But, a friendly listener must say something to "facilitate" them. What you say to someone may make a difference in whether you are helpful or not.

Here are some cases in which students are telling about problems. Read each case and write what you would say in that situation.



**Case 1 - (Jeanne):** Jeanne turns away from her friends and looks at the ground saying, "Well, I don't know. Maybe I could and maybe I coudn't...it's just that I've never tried to do something like that before."

What would you say? Write your response here:

**Case 2 - (Paul):** Paul is chasing after Roger. His fist is raised and he is shouting, "You dirty rat. . . if I ever catch you—you'll be sorry! You won't forget it either. . . ." Then, Paul slows down and walks over to you, still glaring and looking at Roger who has run away.

What would you say? Write your response here:

In each of the two cases, what made you decide to say what you did? What were you hoping your words would do? How do you think Jeanne or Paul would feel about you?

There are many things that you could say in situations like Jeanne's and Paul's. What you say is your response to what is happening. Sometimes the words you speak can be helpful. At other times, your words may be less helpful. Sometimes they can even be hurtful. Let's take a closer look at what could be said in the two cases.

Look back at Case 1. Jeanne turned away from her friends and seemed afraid to try something new. She wasn't sure of herself. She might have been afraid of failing. Jeanne was having some unpleasant feelings at the time. Can you name some of them? Look at the unpleasant word list (Table 1 in Chapter II) and find some words that might tell what she was feeling. Write those words here:

_____

_____

_____

Some people might say to Jeanne, "Oh come on. It's not so hard and you can do it." This might encourage Jeanne. But, she is unsure of herself. She needs more than gentle support—she needs to feel accepted and understood.

Other people might say, "I did it and it was easy." In this case, the focus would be away from Jeanne and on someone else. It sends a message that Jeanne's feelings are unimportant. It says, "Don't feel the way you do. After all, I did it—be like me. It's easy!" Jeanne, of course, is thinking that what she faces doesn't seem easy. So, she may feel misunderstood or embarrassed because she is afraid.

Still other people, perhaps friendly helpers, would hear Jeanne's feelings and respond differently. They might say, "You're not sure you want to try." Then, they would pause and be silent for a moment. Keeping their eyes on Jeanne, they would wait for her to say something more. Jeanne might agree and talk a little more about her fears. Thus, this *feeling-focused response* would help Jeanne feel more understood and cared about.

Here are some more statements. Read the case of Jeanne again. Underline the statement that you would make.

**Case 1 - (To Jeanne):**

1. "You're unsure you want to try."
2. "It's not so hard and you can do it."
3. "What keeps you from trying it?"
4. "I did it and it was easy."

Let's look at these four responses again and imagine what would have happened if you had used them.

1. "You're unsure you want to try." In this response, you could see that she was feeling "unsure" of herself. "Unsure" is a *feeling word*. It shows her that you *understand*.
2. "It's not so hard and you can do it." This response shows you were trying to make her feel better. But, your support also ignores her feelings. This may be a better response later, after Jeanne thinks you understand her situation.
3. "What keeps you from trying it?" A question is asked. This may help her talk more. Yet, it doesn't show that you understand her feelings.
4. "I did it and it was easy." This response might even hurt. You put the focus on yourself and what you did. You also made her feelings of "not being sure" sound unimportant.

**Case 2 - (To Paul):** Read the case of Paul again and underline the statement that focuses on his feelings.

1. "You'd better be careful or you'll be in trouble, Paul."
2. "You're really mad, Paul."
3. "Hey, Paul, .what happened between you and Roger?"
4. "I know just what you feel, Paul. Roger will be sorry someday."

Look now at these responses to Paul:

1. "You'd better be careful or you'll be in trouble, Paul." If you picked this response, you are giving him some advice. It might be helpful. But, he probably already knows what you've said. Your warning ignores his feelings.
2. "You're really mad, Paul." This response has a feeling word—"mad." You are showing that you heard some of his feelings. This is a *feeling-focused response.*
3. "Hey, Paul, what happened between you and Roger?" This is a question. It can help him talk some more. But, you are not showing that you understand his feelings at this point.
4. "I know just what you feel, Paul, and Roger will be sorry someday." Even though you say you know his feeling—there is no feeling word. That is not enough. In addition, the last part — "Roger will be sorry someday" — tells what *you* are thinking, not what Paul is feeling.

Here are two more cases. This time you will have some choices. You might not use the same words. Yet, if you were to speak, which responses would you choose?

**Case 3 - (Diane):** "My parents are going to be so mad when they get that note from Mrs. Jamison (her teacher). I'll have to stay at home for two weeks. I'll never get out to play. I'm really going to be in trouble when I get home."

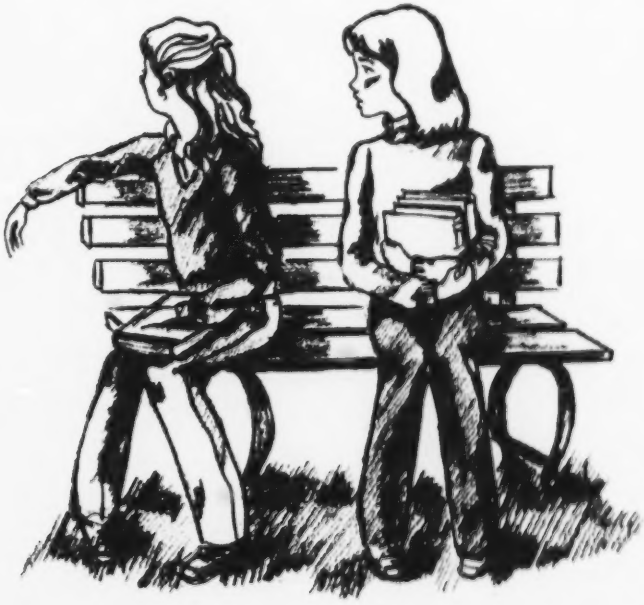
Your response: Rank order the responses. Number the one you would choose first (1) and last (4).

_____(a) Talk with Mrs. Jamison and tell her how much trouble you will be in, if that note goes home.

_____(b) You're worried about what's going to happen when you get home.

_____(c) What do you think your parents will say to you?

_____(d) You are going to have to face up to your parents when you get home.



**Case 4 - (Joe):** "It's one of the best things that could happen to me. You see, I sold the most subscriptions for the paper this year. So, I get the free trip to Disney World."

Your Response: Rank order the responses. Mark those you would choose first (1) and last (4).

_____(a) Wow! Selling those subscriptions got you a real prize.

_____(b) Wow! How did you sell so many subscriptions?

_____(c) Wow! You sound so excited!

_____(d) Wow! I went to Disney World last year and it was fun.

There are many things that could be said to Diane and Joe. However, some very effective facilitators ranked their responses in this way:

| For Diane: | | For Joe: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Response | Rank | Response |
| 1. | B | 1. | C |
| 2. | D | 2. | A |
| 3. | C | 3. | B |
| 4. | A | 4. | D |

You may have an idea about why some responses were picked as "more facilitative" than others. When you read on and you will find some reasons that will explain the choices.

### Three Helpful Responses

In Chapter I you learned about some important ideas about helpers. Friendly helpers are most helpful when they are seen by others as caring, accepting, understanding and trustworthy. What you say and do can determine whether or not others see you as friendly. One way to look at helping others is to ask: What must I do to be a helping person? What are some things I can say that will keep attention on the person I am working with?

There are three important kinds of helping responses that you can learn. You can use them to facilitate others to think about their ideas and feelings. These three responses are:

1. Ask open questions.
2. Clarify and summarize the ideas.
3. Focus on the person's feelings.

**Ask Open Questions**

There are many kinds of questions. Look at these:

1. Why did you do that?
2. What made you do that?
3. How did you do that?
4. When did you do that?
5. Where did you do that?
6. Who did you do that with?
7. Did you do that?
8. Are you going to do that again?

The first six questions ask the person to answer with more than a simple "yes" or "no." They are called *open questions* because they help "open up" the conversation. The person is encouraged to talk more. On the other hand, the last questions (7 and 8) are *closed questions.* They can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." There is no need to explain more. The question has been answered and the conversation is closed.

Here are some examples of closed questions.

1. Do you like school?
2. Is that your book?
3. Did you study your lesson?
4. Did you do your homework?
5. Do you like him?
6. Are you going to the game?

If a person is unsure about talking with you, this kind of question is not very useful. Now, look at these open questions:

1. What do you like best (or least) about school?
2. What do you like to read?
3. How do you study your lesson?
4. What do you think about him?
5. How do you plan to do your homework?

The person must give more information. More words are needed to answer the questions.

Now, you try it. Write down a *closed question* and then an *open question* on the topic of school. Then do the same for the topic of friends. Look at the example about sports first.

Example: **Topic: Sports**

*A Closed Question:*

Do you like to watch sports?

*An Open Question:*

How do you feel about tennis?

**Topic: School**

*Your Closed Question:* _____

_____

*Your Open Question:* _____

_____

**Topic: Friends**

*Your Closed Question:* _____

_____

*Your Open Question:* _____

_____

One advantage is that a question keeps attention on the person you are trying to help. It asks that person to tell you more. It gives the person a chance to think more about ideas or problems. Your questions also show that you are interested. You are showing that you want to hear more. You are going to take some more time to listen.

## Questioning a Friend

**Activity 3.1**

Sit in a circle with other students. Someone in the group volunteers to start. That person briefly tells something that has happened at school or at home.

Begin with the person on the left of the volunteer. Go around the circle while each member *asks the volunteer either a closed or an open question* about what was said. The volunteer does not answer the question, but *tells what kind of question was asked.*

Then, another volunteer takes a turn. Again, questions are asked of the volunteer, who names them as either open or closed questions.

**Clarify and Summarize the Ideas**

Questions can help a person talk more. But, nobody wants to spend a lot of time talking with someone who asks too many questions. Suppose that a person just asks questions and nothing else. That person may be seen as someone who is trying to be a detective —someone who just wants the facts of the case. Interest in the person is not shown.

*Clarifying* or *summarizing* what people say is one way of telling them that you are listening. It also helps them to hear what they have been saying to you. It is as if you took a picture with a camera. By clarifying or repeating ideas, you can give them a picture of what they said. They can think about or study the picture you show them and learn more about themselves.

Look at these statements:

Example 1: "Correct me if I am wrong. I heard you saying that getting good grades is more important to your parents than to you."

Example 2: "You seem to be saying that you would like to have more time to play."

Example 3: "Let me see if I am following you. You said that you were going to change schools next week."

When you clarify or summarize, try to repeat the main ideas. This helps focus the discussion by picking out some important things that are being said. Look at these summarizing statements:

Example 1: "Let's see now, you said that you want to get better grades and that you need to study more. You also said that you'd have to study more at home."

Example 2: "I'm hearing two important ideas from what you are saying: (1) you want to have a party and (2) you don't know how to get started at this point."

Example 3: "You said at least three key things about yourself, David, as you were talking—you like to play baseball and you want to go out for the team, but your parents aren't sure you should play."

## Clarifying and Summarizing Ideas

**Activity 3.2**

Sit in a circle with other students. Someone volunteers and briefly describes something that happened at home or at school. The *persons sitting next to the volunteer clarify or summarize what was heard— first the person on the right and then the person on the left.*

Someone else then volunteers to tell something. The persons sitting to the right and left summarize or clarify the ideas. Go around the group until each person has had a chance to practice. If someone in the group is unable to clarify or summarize, then the volunteer can help with some important words or ideas.

**Focus on the Person's Feelings**

Feeling words are important to a friendly helper. They show understanding and acceptance. You will want to use them in your talk with others. When people hear you say something about their feelings, they will feel closer to you. They will learn that you are understanding of them. Sadly, not many people listen for feelings or talk about them. This is something all of us need to practice more. It is a skill that effective facilitators need.

You have already read about feelings and feeling words (Chapter II). You know now that people always talk with emotion (unpleasant and pleasant feelings). Some feelings are stronger than others. They are easy to identify. Other feelings are often there too. But you must listen carefully for them. You will also want to watch for them as they show up in a person's actions.

After you hear or see a feeling (or some feelings) that a person is having, what do you do next? How can you tell the person that you understand?

Kelly was hoping to be elected by his classmates to the student council. But, when the votes were counted, Kelly was not elected. After class, Kelly looked unhappy. Look at these examples. Each of them shows that Kelly's "disappointment" is understood.

Example 1: "Kelly, you feel disappointed."

Example 2: "Kelly, you are disappointed."

Example 3: "Kelly, it's disappointing to you."

Can you think of any other ways to arrange the words to tell Kelly that you hear disappointment? No matter how the words might be arranged, the most important part of your statement would be the word "disappointment." Or, you may want to use another word like disappointment, such as "discouraged," "sad," or "let down."

All of these words show that you understand Kelly's unpleasant feeling. If you are wrong, he will correct you. Then, you will understand better. If you are on target, then he will feel understood. He will know that you are really listening to him.

Here is another case. It is the story of a young girl who is having problems with her friends. They sometimes get along well with each other. At other times, they argue and say things that hurt each other's feelings.

On this day, Claudette thinks that the other girls (Wendy, Camilla and Janice) are talking about her. She is sure that Janice is trying to get the other girls not to like her. Imagine that Claudette has decided to talk with you about her problem with Janice. Here is how she begins:

**Claudette:** That Janice is mean. She's a bad one. She's always trying to get my friends away from me. Like today, there she is telling lies about me—like I told stories about Wendy and Camilla being stuck-up, and things like that. . . . Well, it just isn't true! Why does Janice do things like that? I didn't ever do anything to her. I just hate her and hope that she gets what's coming to her one of these days!

That's a lot of words from Claudette. She has said a lot to you. Did you hear pleasant or unpleasant feelings, or both? What are some words that might tell what Claudette was feeling? She seems to have many feelings. (See Table 1 in Chapter II if it can help).

Now, it's your turn to respond. What will you say? You could ask her some questions. Or, you could try to summarize or clarify her main ideas about Janice. However, this time think of a feeling-focused response. *Write* some statements below that tell the feelings and show that you understand.

A possible response:

_____

_____

_____

Another possible response:

_____

_____

_____

Another possible response:

_____

_____

_____

Now, look at your responses. *Underline* the feeling word that you used in each response.

As you practice responding to feelings, it might be helpful to remember that this is a skill that needs a lot of practice. More and more people are learning to hear feelings and to speak up about them. Yet, some people—including many adults—are still just learning about this skill. You might find it difficult at first, but with practice, it will get easier and you will feel more at ease.

## Feeling-Focused Responses

### Activity 3.3

Sit in a circle with other students. Someone volunteers and tells something that happend at home or at school. The persons sitting next to the volunteer respond to the feelings that were heard — first the person on the right, then the person on the left.

If it helps, start by deciding if the feelings were unpleasant, pleasant, or both. Someone else then volunteers to tell something. The persons sitting to the right and left make their feeling-focused responses. After everyone has had a turn, talk about the responses.

## Following Charlie's Talk

### Activity 3.4

Charlie is talking to a facilitator about something that is important to him. Here are some responses that were given to him.

1. "It's going to be your favorite color — red."
2. "How will you earn the money to buy it?"
3. "It's exciting to think about it."
4. "Have your ever had one before?"
5. "It was discouraging to see the price tag."
6. "Let me see, first you are going to look around some more and then you are going to decide."

Can you identify each of the helping statements that were made to Charlie?

What do you think is important to him?

Connect the dots below by following the *odd numbers only*. You will get a picture of what Charlie talked about.

## Summary

There are many things that you can do and say when trying to be a friendly helper. Some are more helpful than others. Three very helpful responses are:

1. Ask Open Questions
2. Clarify and Summarize Ideas
3. Make Feeling-Focused Statements

When you use these three responses, the persons you are helping can then think more about their ideas and feelings. You will be seen as a careful listener. You will show that you care and that you are trying to understand. What you say can make you a friendly helper.

## Chapter IV

# Helping Solve Problems

Deborah was a fifth grade student who rode the bus to school. She liked sitting with her friends and talking with them about all sorts of things. The bus ride was okay, except for one thing. Deborah's little sister, who was in the first grade, also rode the bus and often got into trouble with the bus driver.

Deborah's mother said, "Now, you look out for her. She's your sister and you take care of her. Don't let her bother the other children. Sit with her and make her keep her hands to herself. That's not much to ask, is it?"

So, each day Deborah had to watch after her little sister, who wouldn't listen to Deborah. In the eyes of her sister, Deborah was "bossy" and "mean." Deborah's friends still sat together and talked about their interests. Feeling left out and angry, Deborah often spoke sharply to her sister. Other times she sat quietly, staring out of the window.

Deborah had a problem. She had some unpleasant feelings. What could she do? What would you do?

**Problems, Problems, Problems!**

A problem is something that happens which makes you "stirred up" with unpleasant feelings. It is something that you must work on before you can feel "settled" or easy again.

*Problems are challenges. While some are more serious than others, problems are a part of everyday living.* Some last longer than others and demand more attention. Some problems seem like they will never end, while others are solved quickly. However, all of us can learn to solve problems better. Problem-solving is an important skill for student facilitators.

## Students Have Problems Too

### Activity 4.1

Here are some problems that some students say that they have had. Read the problems. Put an "X" in front of those that you, or students you know, have had.

_____1. I am having trouble understanding and learning my math.

_____2. I don't want to read out loud to the class.

_____3. I just can't seem to get along with teachers.

_____4. I have trouble getting along with my brothers and sisters.

_____5. I have difficulty following our family rules.

_____6. I have to take care of someone who is sick.

_____7. I have trouble making new friends.

_____8. I like a girl, but she doesn't like me.

_____9. My grandfather smokes too much.

_____10. My mother nags me about my grades.

_____11. My dad works too much. He thinks we need things, but I want him to spend more time with me.

_____12. I am overweight.

_____13. I hate tests.

_____14. I don't like the idea of getting old.

_____15. I don't like the darkness in my room at night.

**Who Has Problems?**

Everyone has problems sometimes. It is natural for people of all ages to be concerned about things and other people. Even little children have problems which they try to work out. For example, whenam's baby brother is hungry, he has a problem. He wants food and cries to let others know that he is hungry. When his mother feeds him his problem is over—for awhile.

As children grow older, mothers and fathers aren't always around to help fix things. For example:

> Jimmy, a second grade student, was scared to go to school. He was afraid that some big kids would pick on him. He had to decide what to do. At first, Jimmy cried and said he was sick. He wanted to stay home from school, but he had to go to school anyway. Jimmy was "stirred up." He felt scared and had trouble deciding what to do next.

Some people always seem to be happy. They don't look like they have any problems. When we see them, they may be wearing a friendly smile. However, even these "happy people" have their share of problems, too. Some hide stirred up feelings behind their smiles because they don't want anyone to know about their problems. They are afraid nobody will understand. For example:

> Tom is an excellent student. He usually had all As on his report card. On his last card he received three Bs. He knew that he had not studied as much as before. What would his parents think? He knew that his teacher was disappointed in him. Some of his classmates wished they had his "problem." They didn't see why he was so upset.
>
> Tom thought no one would understand. He put on a smile and pretended that his grades didn't bother him. He laughed and said, "Who cares? I don't." Tom seemed happy enough, but he really wasn't.

Adults have problems, too. Think of a time when your teachers were stirred up with emotion. What were they feeling? Can you think of some feeling words that would describe what was happening inside them? Who could they talk with about their problem? Could they talk with you?

Our president, governors, and other leaders face many problems in government. The problems are complex and they need careful listeners. To help them, assistants collect information and listen to their ideas. Talking with others helps settle problems. With this kind of help, our leaders can find the best solutions.

Some presidents also faced difficult problems in their personal lives. President Lincoln's mother died when he was nine years old. He also had some business failures later in life. Write two feeling words on the lines below that describe how President Lincoln might have felt on these occasions. Use Table 1 in Chapter II if it will help.

_____

_____

President Roosevelt's legs were paralyzed from the disease polio. He needed a wheelchair and special braces. Write two feeling words on the lines below that decribe how he might have felt.

_____

_____

These presidents had problems, but they learned to overcome them. Who helped them with their personal problems? History books don't often report the work of some friendly helpers.

## A Problem-Solving Model

Some problems are easy to solve. We seem to know just what to do. However, at other times problems are more difficult and take more effort. These problems need special attention.

When a difficult problem arises, some people worry so much that they rush into a quick solution. However, the first and easiest answer is not always the best. Sometimes quick decisions are regretted later.

On the other hand, other people worry so much that they delay making a decision. They let their problems go on for too long of time and are unhappy.

No one has discovered a sure way of solving everyone's problems. There seem to be no set rules for finding a best solution. There are no sure answers to people's problems. What, then, are you to do when helping others?

You can learn a five-step problem-solving model that other student facilitators have found useful. It can help you and someone else to make decisions when problems are difficult.

**The Model: Five Important Questions**

When people talk with you about their problems, focus on their feelings and ideas. As a friendly helper, help them talk about themselves. This takes careful attention and your best listening skills. You can also guide them through some problem-solving steps that might be thought of as *five important questions*. Look at these steps and questions:

Step 1: What is the problem?

Step 2: What have you tried?

Step 3: What else could you do and what would happen?

Step 4: What's your next step?

Step 5: How did it go?

**Step 1: "What is the problem?"**

In this first step, the person talks about a situation. As you have learned, listen carefully and use open questions. Clarify ideas and make feeling-focused responses. Don't rush. Let the person tell you about the situation. When you think you understand what the problem is, try summarizing it in a few words.

**The Case of Kevin:** Kevin liked baseball. He was a good fielder and loved to bat. His parents worried about his grades. He had not done well in spelling or math. They told him that he had to do better on his next report card, or he would not be able to play baseball.

Kevin studied very hard for two weeks. But, there was little improvement on his test scores. He thought about giving up, but he wanted very much to play baseball. One day he tore up a test and threw it in the wastebasket on his way out of the classroom. He was angry.

Let's pretend that Kevin wanted your help with his problem. After you both find a place to be alone, he begins to tell you about it.

Kevin: Nothing I do turns out right. I tried and tried, but it didn't do any good.

Your response: (Write a response.)

_____

_____

_____

Kevin: I really want to play baseball, but I can't get those dumb spelling and math tests.

Your response:

_____

_____

_____

Kevin: See, my parents told me that if I don't do better in spelling and math, I can't play baseball this summer.

Your response:

_____

_____

_____

Kevin: Yeah, and I'd rather play baseball than do that dumb old math stuff, anyway.

Your response:

_____

_____

_____

Kevin: I tried real hard this time. I studied and studied, but I still didn't do better on today's tests. I don't know what to do.

Your response:

_____

_____

_____

Did you use facilitative responses? Did you focus on Kevin's feelings, clarify or summarize his ideas and ask him questions? What, then, is Kevin's problem? Complete the following response.

"Kevin, it seems that your problem is _____

_____."

**Step 2: "What have you tried?"**

After you help clarify the problem, you can ask a person this question: "*What have you tried?*" This second question will help you both think about what's been done to this point. Then, together you can explore what has been working and what has not. Remember, the person will also be sharing some important feelings during this step too. Be sure to respond to some of them.

Let's continue to help Kevin by writing some more helpful responses. You begin this step by asking him: "What have you tried so far, Kevin?"

Kevin: Well, I studied every night after dinner this week. I paid real close attention in class and I did all the homework.

Your response: What else have you done, Kevin?

Kevin: I also tried not to watch TV until I got my homework done. Sometimes that worked and sometimes it didn't.

Your response: _____

_____

People may tell you many things that they have done. It is still helpful to ask, "*What else have you tried?*" You want them to think about all the ways that they have tried to work out their problem. Sometimes they think of better ideas just from talking about what they have done already. Then, go on to the next step.

**Step 3: "What else could you do and what would happen?"**

You and Kevin have discussed his problem and what he has done. Now, it is time to "brainstorm" some other possible ideas. You can encourage Kevin to talk more by asking: "*What else could you do?*" This will lead him to think of still other ideas and solutions.

As he talks about each idea, ask: "*What would happen?*" He will then think about the results his actions might have. Every action has some kind of result. Thinking about what he might do and the results of his actions can help Kevin select the best course to follow.

Now, try these with Kevin:

Your response: What else could you do?

Kevin: Well, maybe I could talk to Mr. Kelsey (his teacher) about it.

Your response: What would happen if you do that?

Kevin: He might give me some ideas.

Your response: What else could you do?

Kevin: Well, . . . I could ask my friend, Pete, to help.

Your response: What would happen if you ask Pete?

Kevin: He would probably tell me to do things which would get me into trouble.

Your response: He would have some ideas, but they lead to trouble. Okay, what else could you do?

Kevin: I don't know.

Your response: You can't think of anything else?

Kevin: Hum. . . . No, I can't think of anything.

If you have any ideas that might work, wait until Kevin has finished telling you all his ideas. Then, offer your sug-

gestions. Do you have any for Kevin? If you have, write them here:

Your response: Well, Kevin, you might _____

_____ .

**Step 4: "What's your next Step?"**

Now it is time for Kevin to decide what he is going to do. There might be several ideas from which he could choose. Ask Kevin: *"What is your next step?* He can think about it and choose between some of the ideas that have been discussed. Begin again:

Your response: Kevin, what is your next step?

Kevin: I don't know. Maybe I'll go talk to Mr. Kelsey. Maybe he can give me some help. Besides, then maybe he'll think of something if he knows what's happening to me.

Your response: _____

_____

Kevin: It's kind of scary though.

Your response: _____

_____

Kevin: Maybe if I can get Jerry to go with me, it would be easier.

Your response: _____

_____

Kevin: Yep, that's what I'm going to have to do.

Your response: *When* are you going to do it?

Kevin: Oh. . . I guess at noon tomorrow. He usually eats alone in his room and then nobody would be around to bother us.

**Step 5: "How did it go?"**

The last important part of the problem-solving model is to follow-up. Let the person talk about how things turned out. *How did it go?* This final step will show that you really care about the person.

Kevin might enjoy talking with you again about the meeting with his teacher. No matter what happens, he may want to think about the situation some more. He may need some more help to think about the results and about another plan.

Some problem-solving can take place in one or two brief meetings. Other problems take more time. Some times several meetings are needed before things are settled.

Student facilitators help people move toward their goals. They help them take the next steps that are needed to solve a problem. If a person still has a problem, after going through the five steps try again. If you are unsure of what you should do next, talk with the school counselor. You can also suggest that your friend talk with someone who has more experience. You might be of more help at a later time.

**Summary**

There are a lot of ways to solve a problem. Some are better than others. The best problem-solvers usually have a plan which they can use. It makes things go easier.

This chapter described five steps and questions that you can use when helping others. When you are helping people with their problems, use these steps:

Step 1: What is the problem?

Step 2: What have you tried?

Step 3: What else could you do and what would happen?

Step 4: What is your next step?

Step 5: How did it go?

## A Problem-Solving Journey

### Activity 4.2

Beth has a problem. She is new to school and tells you that she doesn't have any friends. You can lead her through the five problem-solving steps. Start at the beginning and follow the maze, leading her through the steps, until you reach the end.

What is the problem?
Start Here
What have you tried?
What else could you do? What would Happen?
Finish
How did it go?
What is your next step?

## Chapter V

# Giving Feedback

People with problems want to talk with a person who is caring, accepting, understanding, and trustworthy. You can be such a person by asking open questions, clarifying and summarizing ideas, and responding to feelings. These three kinds of responses can be helpful as you guide someone through the problem-solving model.

If you are a careful listener and have some helpful suggestions, you can be a valuable friend to someone who is having problems. But, most friends want to know more about what you are feeling and thinking about them. They want to know what reactions you are having to them. How do you see them? They will sometimes want some *feedback*.

Feedback is a term that comes from science. Scientists need feedback or information from machines to tell them when things are on or off target. They must have some device that tells them when to make corrections in their work. In this sense, feedback tells them whether they are right or wrong.

Human beings are too complex to give feedback like a machine or a computer. Everyone is different and not everyone sees things the same way. Some people do things the same. Others do them differently. Yet, all may achieve the same good results. Exact directions for living life and making decisions are almost impossible. Instead, we rely on our best judgment and feedback from others to make choices and decisions.

### A Feedback Model

How can you give others feedback? What can you do to help others learn more about your reactions to them? This chapter has a three-part model that can be used with students and adults. The three parts are not a final answer for telling others what you think and feel about them. But, they are a guide that can help you organize your thoughts, tell what you've seen or heard, and what you are feeling. This model helps you tune-in to yourself and speak up.

**Part 1: Be Specific About What You See and Hear.**

If you are going to give someone feedback, you must be aware of what that person is doing. Pay close attention. Listen not only to the person's words but how the words are said. The eyes, mouth, and body position can be clues to what the person is feeling. Use all the information you can to form your ideas.

A person also may trigger feelings in you. Then, you may want to tell the person somthing. In that case, describe what you see and hear, or what has happened. Be specific. Give an example, if you can.

Darrell watched his little brother open a birthday gift that he had given him. His brother was excited. His eyes got big and he had a wide smile. "Oh boy—it's just what I wanted—thanks a lot, thanks a lot!"

Even though you were not there, can you imagine what Darrell's little brother was doing? If it helps, close your eyes and picture in your mind someone—like Darrell's brother—opening a gift. The person finds just what was wanted. Can you imagine it?

Think of the many things that Darrell might notice about his little brother—his actions and his words. Being a careful observer and getting a picture is one of the first things you must do, if you are going to tell others about themselves. The more you can tell what you saw and heard, the better you will be in giving feedback.

**Part 2: Tell What You Are Feeling.**

After you have told a person what you have noticed, it is time to tune-in to yourself. Be aware of what you are feeling. Are you having unpleasant feelings or pleasant feelings? If it helps, use your list of feeling words. Find one word that best describes what you are feeling inside. Your feeling is the impact or effect that the person is having on you. It is your reaction to them. Now, speak up. *Let the person know how that person has made you feel.*

You might feel differently from time to time about things that people do. In one situation you might have different feelings than in another. For example, if you received a gift you might feel happy and excited. At another time, you might be disappointed or sad if it is less than what you expected.

Your feelings can change from time to time. Someone might tell you about something that they have done. It may make you feel happy to hear about it. But, as the person talks more, you might begin to feel a little jealous or envious. You may feel both pleasant and unpleasant feelings.

*The most important part of giving feedback is to tell the person what you are feeling.*

**Part 3: Tell What Your Feelings Make You Want To Do.**

Our feelings influence our actions. For example, when you are happy and having fun, you smile and laugh more than at other times. When you are sad and worried, you frown and are less active than at other times. When you are angry, your voice may get louder. You might even say some sharp and hurting words. When you are thankful, you might tell people how much you like what they did You might also say that it makes you want to be around them more.

Feelings can be expressed in many ways. Some ways are better than others. For instance, if you have some warm and caring feelings about your mother, you might:

1. Touch her softly on the arm and smile at her; or
2. compliment her for something that she has done; or
3. make her a special thank you card; or
4. offer to help with something she is doing; or
5. tell others about how much you care about her; or
6. tell her how special she is to you.

What else can you think of? There are so many things you could do. What you do depends upon what you are feeling. What do some of your feelings make you want to do? What part do your feelings play in what you do with others?

*This third step in giving facilitative feedback will help others learn more about the impact that they have on you. It can also help you learn more about yourself.*

### Using the Feedback Model

Look at the cases below. They can help you learn more about feedback. Can you find the three parts in the first case? Put a single line under part one, a double line under part two, and three lines under part three.

**Case 1:** "Donna, you asked Alex if he would try the game again, even though he lost, I was glad. I just wanted to tell you that before we got started in our work."

Let's try another one. This time, however, the order of the three parts have been changed. See if you can find each part by putting a single line under part one, a double line under part two, and three lines under part three.

**Case 2:** "Ronnie, I'm really excited right now. I want to be a student facilitator because I heard you talk about it."

You may want to practice using the three steps or parts in the order that they were first discussed in this chapter. But, you can mix the order, if you wish. Remember to be specific about what the person does, what you are feeling, and what you want to do.

## Family Feedback

Okay, it's time for you to put together some feedback statements of your own. Begin by thinking of someone in your family. It might be either your mother or your father, or someone with whom you are living.

**Looking for Part 1.** Think of a time when you liked being with this person. That is, think of when you had a pleasant experience with this person. Picture it in your mind. Now, write in a sentence or two, what the person did. _

_____

_____

_____

**Looking for Part 2.** Next, think about what pleasant feelings you had at that time. Write some of those pleasant feeling words here:

_____

_____

_____

**Looking for Part 3.** Think about what those feelings made you want to do. They might have made you want to do many things. List some of them here:

_____

_____

_____

**Putting the Parts Together.** Look back at what you have written. You now have enough information for all the parts of the feedback model. Put all three parts together by picking the words you want to use. Write a feedback response to that person here:

(name) _____ , when you _____

_____

_____

_____ .

Now, put a single line under part one (the person's actions), a double line under part two (your feelings), and three lines under part three (what you want to do). Finally, circle the feeling word or words you used.

## Some Feedback to Others

### Activity 5.1

Practice giving some feedback by writing some examples of your own on a piece of paper. Think of people who you would like to give some feedback. Write two or three examples of feedback that you could give these people.

After you have written the examples, can you identify the three parts of the feedback model?

**Feedback to Rod**

Here are some more examples of when two people (Clara and Don) gave feedback to a boy named Rod at different times.

Clara: Hey, Rod, when you invited me to go to your house on Saturday, it sure made me happy. I just wanted you to know that I am looking forward to it and can hardly wait.

Don: I was really glad, Rod, when you said "hello" to me that first day at school. It made me want to thank you for being so friendly.

Clara: Rod, when you said that I should mind my own business, I really got mad. It made me want to tell you that you're not the only one who cares.

Don: I'm kind of sad right now, Rod. When you told me that I'd hurt your feelings because I teased you about your hair, I started thinking more about what I said. I'm sorry.

What is the difference between the first two examples and the last two examples? In the first two examples, Clara and Don are telling Rod about their *pleasant feelings*. These pleasant feelings came from something that he did. In the last two examples, they are sharing some of their *unpleasant feelings* about something he did. In all the examples, however, Clara and Don are using the three parts of the feedback model.

### Complimenting and Confronting Others

We can tune-in to the pleasant feelings we have about what others have done. When we describe these feelings to them, we are *complimenting* them. We are being positive. We are saying something that can cause some pleasant feelings in them.

However, when we tune-in to our unpleasant feelings about what others do, and tell them, we are *confronting* them. There are times to compliment and times to confront. We must learn to do both if we are going to be a real friend and true to ourselves.

Some students don't know what to do with their unpleasant feelings. If they are mad, for example, they might throw things or hit people. They don't know how to talk their problems out. They don't know how to tell their feelings. So, they "act out" to show how they feel and this can cause problems for others.

Learning to tell about your unpleasant feelings can be a very valuable tool. Try to avoid giving advice and telling all of your unpleasant feelings. Focus on those that are building up and really bothering you.

You can help others talk with you about the situation or problem. Be a careful listener. You could also build up some caring, acceptance, understanding, and trust before you confront. Take time to listen and let them talk about what is on their minds. Then, your ideas are much more likely to be heard when it is your turn to talk.

Think of someone whom you would like to confront. What has the person done to cause you some unpleasant feelings? What are your feelings? What do those feelings make you want to do? Now, can you think of something else to talk about with this person? Talk with them. After listening, do you still want to confront them? This is a useful test to give yourself before you confront anyone.

Think of some people that you would like to compliment? What have they have done to cause you some pleasant feelings? What do those pleasant feelings make you want to do? Don't delay. Seek out some of those persons soon. When the time is right, tell them some of your thoughts and feelings using the feedback model. You will be surprised how pleasant it will be for you and the other persons.

### Time for Another Compliment

### Activity 5.2

Think of another person that you would like to compliment. Using the feedback model, give the person a compliment. Try to use all three parts of the model, mixing the order as you wish.

Draw a picture telling about that time. Under the picture, write what you said to the person.

### Summary

Your friends often want to know what you think about them. They want to know what kind of impact they are having on you. With the help of a three-part feedback model, you can either compliment or confront them. To give effective feedback you will want to:

Part 1: Be specific about what you see and hear.

Part 2: Tell what you are feeling (pleasant or unpleasant, or both).

Part 3: Tell what your feelings make you want to do.

The feedback model, and the other helping responses you learned earlier, are skills need by friendly helpers.

## Chapter VI

# Looking At Yourself and Others

Open your left hand. Place it in front of you so that you can see it. Reach out with your other hand. Shake hands and smile! Say "hello" to a very special friend—you!

As a student facilitator, you will be a friend to many people. Because of the skills that you have learned and practiced, others will value your friendship. They will like being around you. They will enjoy having you as a friend.

Friends are very important. Some people spend a life time looking for friends and worrying whether or not they have enough friends. It seems that when we have friends, then we like ourselves better and enjoy life more. Can you ever have too many friends? Are some friends closer to you than others? Who is your best friend?

Close friends get more of our attention than others. We get to know them better and take more interest in them. We give them more of our time. We expect them to ask us for help when they need it. We are close, but not so close that we give them all our attention, time and energy. They are not the only people we care about, accept and trust. They are important to us, but so are other people.

One of the best friends that you will ever have is very close to you right now. Do you know who it is? You just shook hands and said hello to your closest friend. That's right—it's you! You are your own best friend! How much do you really know about yourself? What kind of a friend are you to yourself?

While you may have many friends, no one will know you as well as you know yourself. You will share ideas and feelings with others. You will also have many ideas and feelings that you are unable or don't want to talk about.

Sometimes you cannot share them because there is not enough time, the place is not right, or some situations prevent it. At other times, you will have private thoughts and feelings that you want to keep to yourself. This is why you must be a good friend to yourself. Listen carefully to your inner thoughts and feelings. You, too, will find it helpful to explore your ideas.

Imagine that you are in a very difficult situation. You're feeling unsure of yourself. What kind of thoughts might go through your mind? You might ask yourself questions such as: "What am I doing here?" or, "What should I do now?" You might even give some directions to yourself: "I really need to think about this more." Or, "I'd better do something, right away!" Then there are times when you may talk with yourself and reach some conclusions: "Hey, that was a pretty good idea." "That's neat!" "Things are going well for me today!" Or, "That's one of the dumbest things I've ever done."

This kind of "inner talk" with yourself can be valuable. It helps you to get a better understanding of yourself and to think things through. On the other hand, if you spend too much time wondering about yourself, then you may cause yourself even more problems. Thinking only of yourself—to be totally self-centered—can make you blind to the world around you.

Many people don't really know themselves. They are so busy thinking about other things. They fail to realize how special they are. It takes time to know one's self. But, self-understanding is a gift that we can give ourselves. It makes life more fun and interesting. Without self-understanding, persons are limited in what they can do. With self-understanding, a person can solve problems and facilitate others better.

In this chapter you will learn more about yourself. You will also learn how to help others take a closer look at themselves.

Here are some questions that you can probably answer very easily. Write an answer to each one.

1. What is the color of your hair? _____
2. Are you left-handed or right-handed? _____
3. Where do you live? _____
4. What school do you attend? _____

Here are some other questions that may need more thought. Now, answer these questions.

1. What is your favorite vacation place? _____
2. What animal would you like most to have as a pet? _____
3. What is your least favorite color? _____
4. Who do you like to play with the most? _____

There are still other questions that you might ask yourself. They may take even more time because you must explore your thoughts and feelings to find answers. Try these:

1. You are going to another planet to live for the rest of your life. You can only take three things, besides your family. What would they be?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What is one thing that would make the world better?

   _____

3. Who do you most want to be like?

   _____

4. What are two things you would like to change about yourself?

   (a) _____

   (b) _____

Answering questions about yourself can be interesting and fun. Sometimes, however, it's puzzling or confusing. Yet, as you ask yourself questions and seek answers, self-understanding grows.

## Your Self-Image

*Your self-image is the picture that you have of yourself.* It is how you have come to see yourself.

Do you see yourself as a happy person? Do you think that you are too heavy or too thin? Do you think that you are strong or weak? The answers to these questions, and others like them, can help you learn more about your self-image.

*Your self-image affects the way you do things.* You might believe that you are not very good at something. This belief can discourage you from trying. It could even make you give up easily.

Sally was a sixth grade student who didn't like spelling. One day her friend asked why she wasn't studying for a spelling test. Sally said, "It won't do any good, anyway." Sally thought she was going to fail, even if she studied. When the teacher finally gave the test, she did not do well. After class, Sally told her friend, "See, I told you. I'm a poor speller. I just can't get those words right."

The thoughts we have about ourselves can influence our efforts. How did Sally's thoughts affect her test results? If she saw herself positively, could she do better?

When Jerome looked in a mirror, he felt sad. He was shorter and thinner than the other boys in his class and he didn't like it. He worried about his strength. His father asked him if he wanted to join the community Boy's Club and play on a team. Jerome wanted to play more sports and compete with the other boys. But, he didn't like what he saw when he looked in the mirror.



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What kind of thoughts do you think Jerome is having about his "self?" How might Jerome's self-image affect his decisions? Write some of your ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to discover more about your self-image? How can you help others think more about themselves? Where do you begin? There are at least four areas where you can start your search of "self."

(1) physical self,

(2) beliefs and attitudes,

(3) skills and abilities,

(4) self with others.

## Your Physical Self

No two people look exactly the same. Even identical twins have their differences, if you look closely. It would be a strange world if we all looked alike. Our differences make life more interesting. Most important, they also make each of us unique and special.

Some people don't like how they look and how they are different. Others like themselves better but can still find something about their physical self that they would like to change. Still others don't care. Yet, how we see our physical self can influence what happens in our lives.

Becky was a fourth grade girl who knew that her parents made less money than others. Her family had fewer things, including money for nice clothes. Becky was ashamed of what she wore and thought that she wasn't very pretty.

Becky often wore the same two dresses to school. Her hair was usually tangled and dull. It hung down over her eyes and looked uncared for. Her hands were often dirty. But, behind her unkept appearance, Becky had a nice smile. When she smiled and stood up straight, her eyes were bright and friendly.

She had some private talks with a "friendly helper" who noticed her. At one point, the facilitator helped her think more about her appearance and what others might notice most about her. "Becky, when I see you at school and see that you haven't brushed your hair, it makes me wonder. I ask myself, "Why doesn't she care about herself more?"

This feedback caught Becky by surprise. She had taken little time to do anything about her appearance. She was too busy feeling sad for herself. Becky thought that no one noticed or cared.

One day, Becky decided to get up early and wash her hair. She brushed it until it was shiny and free of tangles. She also washed her face and hands. It was refreshing to get the sleep out of her eyes and feel her clean skin. She wondered if anyone would notice. Most important, she felt better about herself.

When she arrived at school, her teacher saw the change at once "Hi, Becky, did your mother do your hair this morning? It looks so pretty." Becky felt herself smile and stand taller. She was suddenly less afraid to look at others in the class. She felt proud of herself. Taking better care of her physical self seemed more important. Though she didn't have many clothes, she learned that she could still do things to help her look and feel better.

Some students worry that they are too short. Others worry that they are too tall. Some don't like the way they look at all and fear that others will make fun of them. These students have a difficult time accepting their physical selves.

Whether we like it or not, all of us are given certain physical traits by our parents. These traits are passed down from one generation to another. We must learn to accept the parts of the physical self that cannot be changed. This includes color of skin, eyes, and hair. We must also accept the size of our noses, feet, hands, and legs. Yet, given what we are born with, there are still some things that we can change.

John, a friend of Becky's, was shorter than other boys his age. But, he lifted weights and exercised to build up his strength. Later other boys learned to respect him for both his size and strength. Becky, of course, learned that she felt prettier when she took time to groom herself.

Are there some things about your appearance that you don't like? Which ones would you change if you could? Which ones can you change? Which ones must you learn to live with and accept as part of who you are? Your attitudes about your physical self influence the way you are around others and the confidence you have in yourself.

## Your Beliefs and Attitudes

What are some things that you believe are true about life? About people? About school? About the future? You already have beliefs and attitudes that influence your decisions and actions. You will keep some of these forever. Others will change as you grow older. What beliefs and attitudes are most important to you now?

All of us learn things from others about life. We learn a lot from our families. They teach us to think about ourselves. We also learn from our teachers and friends. They have their own beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is best for them. Our beliefs also come from television, books, newspapers, churches and synagogues, and from many other places. Our attitudes and beliefs influence what we do.

Can a person disagree with your beliefs and still be your friend?

Think more about your beliefs and attitudes. This will help you to relax and to listen better to others. It also helps you to understand other points of view.

You can be a good listener even though you disagree. Student facilitators help others explore ideas and feelings. They try not to tell others what they should believe. They help individuals make their own decisions.

## Your Skills and Abilities

All of us are skillful at some things and not so skillful at others. We all have skills. We are proud of some and would like to improve others.

It also seems that some people have more natural ability to do things than others. Yet, all of us can develop our skills and abilities more. We can all be successful at some things.

Your skills and abilities influence the way you feel and act. When you have mastered the skills in this book, you will feel better about helping others. You will have more confidence in your ability.

Sometimes it is helpful to keep your personal strengths and limits in mind. For example:

> Juan was a new student from Argentina. When the boys met after school to play football, he stood on the sidelines and watched curiously. This was a different kind of game than he had played before. Football in Argentina was not the same. It was more like the sport of soccer and Juan had learned some different skills. He was skilled at using his feet and head rather than his hands. Juan wasn't even sure of the game rules.

Later the boys asked Juan to play. Juan felt a little scared and unsure. He couldn't pass the ball very well and usually fumbled it when it was passed to him. He was embarrassed. He wondered if he should continue playing. However, when it came time to punt the football, Juan's kicking skill really showed. The ball went high and sailed through the air. The other boys were amazed at how far he kicked the ball. This gave Juan more confidence. It helped him to relax and enjoy the game more.

He had a skill that others could learn from him. But, he also knew that he had to learn some other skills.

Like Juan, you do some things well. There are also some skills and abilities that you will want to improve. Get involved and practice.

## Your Self With Others

We know that other people influence the way we think about ourselves and the things we do. When we tell a funny story, people might laugh and smile with us. This tells us that what we did was fun for them. It also tells us that we can be funny at times. Yet, when we say other things, people might frown or look worried. This tells us that we are doing something that concerns them. What they do and say can make us wonder about ourselves. We may even stop doing whatever they frowned upon.

How do others see you? Are you the same around everyone? Do you act the same with your teachers as you do with your friends? What about your actions with people who are younger than you?

Sandra was a friendly helper. She and her friends used this book to learn more about themselves. In a group activity, she described how her classmates might see her. She wrote: (1) helpful, (2) smart, and (3) funny, at times.

Then she wrote what her teacher might say about her. The words were: (1) nice, (2) helpful, and (3) talks a lot.

How are the two lists similar? Different? Which words are positive? Negative? If she wanted to change these views, what could she do?

What words would you write in this activity? How do your classmates see you? What do you do that makes them think of you this way? What about your teachers?

Like Sandra, it may be worth your time to think more about how you are with others.

## Summary

You will have many thoughts about yourself. Your inner talk can help you think things through. However, you will also want to talk with others in order to learn more about yourself. Knowing about self lets you solve personal problems and facilitate others better.

One way to gain more self understanding is to know more about your self-image. Your self-image is the picture that you have of yourself. There are at least four ways you can bring your self-picture into focus:

1. Study your physical self. (What are your physical traits?)
2. Study your beliefs and attitudes. (What do you believe?)
3. Study your skills and abilities. (What can you do?)
4. Study how you are with others. How do you act with others? How do they act with you/)

Learning to be a student facilitator can be fun. You learn skills that help others, but you also learn more about yourself.

## Looking at Your Self-Image

### Activity 6.1

For each of the statements, circle the:

"SD" if you strongly disagree.

"D" if you disagree.

"U" if you are undecided.

"A" if you agree.

"SA" if you strongly agree.

**Your Physical Self**

SD D U A SA 1. I like the color of my eyes.

SD D U A SA 2. I am strong.

SD D U A SA 3. I like my hair.

SD D U A SA 4. I am tall enough for my age.

SD D U A SA 5. I am at a good weight for my height.

SD D U A SA 6. I wash my hands often enough.

SD D U A SA 7. I like my hair.

SD D U A SA 8. I look okay.

**Your Skills and Abilities**

SD D U A SA 1. I am smart.

SD D U A SA 2. I have good ideas.

SD D U A SA 3. I have good study habits.

SD D U A SA 4. I am a careful listener.

SD D U A SA 5. I can read well.

SD D U A SA 6. I am good in arithmetic.

SD D U A SA 7. I am good in sports.

SD D U A SA 8. I am good in music.

**Your Beliefs and Attitudes**

SD D U A SA 1. I would rather watch television than play a game with a friend.

SD D U A SA 2. I would rather live in a big city than in a small town.

SD D U A SA 3. Money is the most important thing in life.

SD D U A SA 4. It is okay for boys to cry.

SD D U A SA 5. Religion is important to me.

SD D U A SA 6. Sometimes telling a lie is okay.

SD D U A SA 7. Reading and arithmetic are more important than sports.

SD D U A SA 8. Girls are good athletes.

**Yourself with Others**

SD D U A SA 1. I make friends easily.

SD D U A SA 2. My friends like my ideas.

SD D U A SA 3. My classmates make fun of me.

SD D U A SA 4. I get picked on by my classmates.

SD D U A SA 5. I have lots of friends.

SD D U A SA 6. My parents are disappointed in me.

SD D U A SA 7. My teacher likes me.

SD D U A SA 8. More people like me than don't like me.

## Incomplete Sentences

### Activity 6.2

Finish the sentences to tell more about yourself. These can be shared later in the group.

1. I wish my teacher would _____.
2. I would like to change my _____.
3. Others think I'm _____.
4. If others knew me better, they would say_____.
5. Everyone should _____.
6. One of the most important things in life is _____.
7. I wish others would _____.
8. One of my strengths is _____.
9. I can't _____.
10. I would never _____.
11. In the future, I will _____.
12. Something new I'd like to try is _____.
13. If I had more money, I would _____.
14. The color of blue reminds me of _____.
15. One of my worst habits is _____.
16. One thing that would make me happier is _____.

## Chapter VII

# Becoming a Friendly Helper

You should now have a better idea of what it means to be a student facilitator or friendly helper. The first six chapters of this book gave some important helping skills. You can use these in your work with others. What now?

Your teachers and counselor will have ideas about how you can be a friendly helper in school. You can be a student assistant, tutor, special friend, or small group leader.

**Student Assistant.** You can work with teachers, counselors, principals, secretaries, and other adults in your school as a student assistant. You might assist a teacher with classroom duties and activities. Or, you might be a member of a safety patrol and assist students to and from school. You could work in the school office and greet visitors or answer the phone. You might help the school counselor welcome new students to your school. Your help will be most valued when you use the ideas in this book.

**Tutor.** There are students who need extra help in their school work. Some need to "catch up" because they have been absent. Others need to think through some ideas that they are learning. They need coaching and support from someone who understands them. They also need to talk openly and freely about what they are studying. As a tutor you might meet with students your own age or maybe with younger students. You can meet in a small group or work one-to-one. You may do both. As a friendly helper who is a tutor, you will also learn more yourself.

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**Special Friend.** Some students in your school do not have many friends. They feel left out and lonely. They may act scared or they may be shy. Have you ever noticed someone who stands sadly on the sidelines during recess? You can become a special friend to one or more of these students. You can help them to feel more important, understood, and accepted.

Talking with a special friend like you can be a rewarding experience. It might be just the thing that is needed to help a person gain more confidence. You may never be close friends, but you can share ideas at times. You may even be seen as a big brother or sister or a "buddy."

**Small Group Leader.** Another role is that of a group leader. Students can benefit from working together in a small group. Group discussions can make school more interesting. There is more chance to share. Some students are shy and need practice in talking before a group. Others are loud and have trouble sitting still. They need practice in listening and working together. Still others want a chance to talk and to hear some reactions. Small group leaders can work with special learning projects, both in and out of the classroom.

One fifth grade friendly helper was the leader of a small group of second grade students. She asked each student to tell about a time when they did something with a friend. After each one talked, she made helping responses that showed careful listening. Everyone had a time to talk and to be heard.

Student facilitators may have different titles, depending on the school. Yet, they all learn some helping skills in training and working with others in projects. They can serve in one or more of the four roles.

## Questions Facilitators Have Asked

Being a friendly helper is not always easy. Sometimes things go smoothly. Then again, there will be problem moments. Talk with your trainer about your work. Share your thoughts and feelings with other facilitators. Explore other ways of helping. Here are a few questions that facilitators have thought about.

**Who can I help?** There are a lot of people, both young and old, who can benefit from your help. Everyone enjoys being with a careful listener. It gives them a chance to talk about ideas and to feel important. They might talk about a problem or about something that is just fun to think about.

There are a lot of young people who would enjoy talking with an older student. Children seldom get much time to talk about themselves. Most people are usually telling them what they should do and think about. You can give them a very special gift by taking some time to listen. You could be with them in a class group, on the playground, or somewhere more private.

Adults can use your help, too. Mothers and fathers, teachers and counselors, also like to talk about their ideas with a good listener.

**Am I ready to be a friendly helper?** This is a question that you must ask yourself. We hope that this book has been useful. If you are still unsure of yourself or what you might do, talk with your program trainer. But, at this point, you are probably ready. Reach out and be a friendly helper to those around you. They will like you better for it. Your experiences may be remembered for many years to come.

**What if a person doesn't want my help?** Sometimes people with problems are full of hurt feelings. It is a tough time for them. They may not want to admit that they have unpleasant feelings. They are often unsure of themselves. Be patient. Perhaps it is the wrong time to approach them. Try again some other time. If your caring and interest show, they may want to talk with you later. You may also want to talk with your trainer about the matter.

**What if someone wants my help and I can't help?** Regardless of how skilled you are, there are some problems that may make you feel uncomfortable. There are limits to what you can do. For example, suppose a group of second graders told you that some "big kids" were taking their lunch bags. As a friendly helper, you can listen and help them think about what they can and can't do. You might also find someone who can give more help than you can. For example, they could talk with a counselor, principal, or teacher. You can be helpful, but friendly helpers sometimes need friendly help too.

## You Can Make a Difference

Can you make a difference? It is not possible to list all of the positive things that have been said about student facilitators like you, but here are a few comments:

Jamie (second grade):

I like John. He is my special friend. He talks with me and I talk with him. . . it's fun.

Anthony (third grade):

I like Jim. He is neat. When is he coming back?

Paula (first grade):

I forget her name. . . but she was real nice. We got to talk about how to make friends . . . and stuff like that. I wish we could do more things like that.

Willard (third grade):

Well, you see, I got behind in my school work. I was sick for a long time. Roger explained some of the things I missed. We also talked about some other things too. Catching up was hard work, but he helped me a lot.

Billy (third grade):

The other kids tease me. They call me names. I like it best when Derrick is around and we can talk. He met with all of us and now things are a lot better. But, there is still one guy who I need to talk with Derrick about.

Rosa (kindergarten):

Susan is nice. I wish other big kids were like her.

Parent:

I was really surprised when I heard David talk with his little brother. He was so understanding and helpful. I would never have thought it was possible.

Parent:

Deborah and her friends went into my daughter's second grade class. They took them through some activities. I'm not sure who Deborah is, but my little girl thinks she is wonderful. That's all she's been talking about this week.

Teacher:

I noticed a big change in Ronald since he's been working with Wayne. Ronald is such a lucky boy to have Wayne as a special friend. I wonder if Wayne knows how important he is to Ronald? He may never really know.

Principal:

Student facilitators have made a big difference in our school. They help create a friendly climate. They are also positive examples for others.

Counselor:

Janice doesn't spend much time with Donnie, but that time is important. He's happier, does more school work, and gets along better with others. Janice has really made a difference in Donnie's life.

**Congratulations!**

If you have carefully studied and practiced the ideas in this book, then you are ready to be a student facilitator.

Here is your *Student Facilitator Merit Award.* Merit awards are only given for special efforts and achievements. You have earned it. This is just the beginning of some very rewarding moments in your life. **You have become a friendly helper!**

**Certificate**

WE HEREBY COMMEND

_____

for outstanding service and conduct in

**Becoming a Friendly Helper**

and so present with appreciation this

**Student Facilitator Merit Award**

Awarded this _____ day of _____ 19 ____

_____

**A Leadership Training Program for Young Students**

**by Robert D. Myrick and Robert P. Bowman**

Here is a systematic, step-by-step approach to developing student leadership in elementary and middle schools. **Children Helping Children** is a trainer's manual for counselors, teachers, administrators, and others who want to enhance the learning climate in their schools. It provides a sequence of organized training sessions and activities which prepare students for such helping roles as student assistant, tutor, special friend, and small group leader. Beginning, intermediate and advanced helping projects are also described.

**Becoming a Friendly Helper** is the companion handbook for each student. Stories and activities assist students to be better listeners, speakers, problem solvers, and responsible decision-makers. Students also learn the art of complimenting and confronting others. They become skilled facilitators.

These two practical *how to do it* books provide a basis for a comprehensive student peer facilitator program. They enable young students to become friendly helpers and better learners.

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